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The Octofoil, January/February/March 2019

Ninth Infantry Division Association

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The Octofoil

Jan.-Feb.-Mar.
2019

Volume LIII, No. 1

President's Message

"If we don't remember, who will?"



I am glad that spring is here as this has been the wettest, snowiest winter in Colorado for a long time. We survived the "bomb cyclone", the mother of lowest barometric pressure ever recorded in the state. It closed the Denver airport's six runways and created unbelievable blizzard conditions in the eastern plains.

The 74th Reunion Committee has been working hard on the details for our next gathering in Pittsburgh. I am told that they have lined up a terrific speaker for the Memorial Service and that there are still openings for the "show and tell" presentations. Let Jane or Theda know if you have something to share. I have gotten several inquiries from Vietnam veterans who are planning to attend. Aug 3, 2019 will be the 50th anniversary of the withdrawal of the 9th Infantry Division from the Vietnam theater. That should play an important part in our reunion remembrances. Make your reservations now to attend.

Recently, we have learned that we are losing our very supportive archivist to retirement. Mark Savolis at the College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, MA is retiring on April 23rd. Mark has done a terrific job of organizing the Association's wide ranging diaries, photographs, maps and newsletters that has been collected over the years. Without his help, support and organizing skills most of this information would have been lost forever. Now researchers of the 9th Infantry Division in the future should benefit from this collection. Mark is being replaced by new archivist so if anyone has information that needs to be preserved and added to our collection, we will still have a place at Father Connors' alma mater. We wish Mark the best in retirement as he pursues his Civil War interests and artifact collection.

Our 501(c)3 request from the Internal Revenue Service is still pending. I understand that this could take upwards of 150 days from the filing date so we should have some word by summer and the reunion.

The task force of Clare Irwin and Mary Lovell looking into re-establishing our presence on Facebook and a web page has made progress. Fortunately, Tory Crass, the previous webmaster, has retained control of several domain names and has been a moderator of a Facebook page dedicated to the 9th Infantry Division. Tory has renewed his membership and has agreed to help our group re-establish a presence in the digital world. Stay tuned for more information soon.

Finally, our friend in Europe, Albert Trostorf, recently announced the schedule for the 5th annual Huertgen Forest Battle Tour. This will be the 75th anniversary of the battle so an additional day has been added. Contact Albert at [REDACTED] if you are interested in attending this excellent tour in October.

Terry Barnhart, President
Ninth Infantry Division Association



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ATTENTION, ATTENTION! 74th ANNUAL REUNION



It's not too late to make reservations to attend the 74th Annual Reunion in Pittsburgh PA, from August 2-5, but time is getting short!

Many exciting events are being planned for our reunion, which fortunately is the same weekend as the Pittsburgh Three Rivers Regatta. We will get to see an extraordinary fireworks display on Saturday night! For those who would like to see the Flight 93 Memorial on Monday, August 5, we will be making the 1 1/2 hour drive by van and returning to Pittsburgh that afternoon. A full schedule of reunion activities is on page 3.

The reunion event will cost \$325 (per person), hotel not included. A \$100 per person deposit is due ASAP, with final payment due by June 15th. The registration form is on page 4.

continued on page 3)

OUR MISSION

This Association was formed by the officers and men of the 9th Infantry Division in order to perpetuate the memory of our fallen comrades, to preserve the *esprit de corps* of the Division, to assist in promoting an everlasting world peace exclusively by means of educational activities and to serve as an information bureau about the 9th Infantry Division.

THE OCTOFOIL

The official publication of The Ninth Infantry Division Association Inc.. Published four times yearly, January-March; April - June; July - September; October - December. Material for publication must be received by the publisher according to the following schedule:

December 20 for the January publication
March 20 for the April publication
June 20 for the July publication
September 20 for the October publication

Effective July 1, 2018, the annual fee for membership, which includes The Octofoil, is thirty five dollars (\$35.00) and must be sent to the Membership Chairperson by check or money order made payable to:

The Ninth Infantry Division Association.

Send payment to: **Clare Irwin**
Membership Chairperson

The Ninth Infantry Division Association Inc. is a registered 501(c)19 Veterans' Organization of the Internal Revenue Code in a determination letter issued in January 1948. Contributions are tax deductible.

Volume LIII, No. 1 Jan.-Feb.-Mar. 2019

TIP OF THE HAT

We thank the following members and friends for remembering the Memorial Fund and our buddies who have answered their last Roll Call.

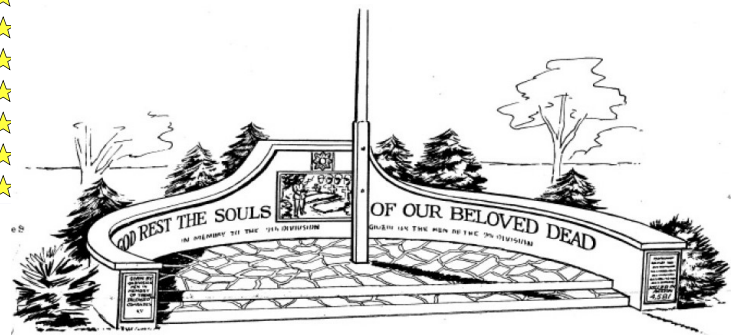
Geoffrey A. Gable

If you would like to donate, please make your check payable to:

The Ninth Infantry Division Association

Please note in the memo section of the check "Tip of the Hat" and mail to:

Mary Cooper,



Friends of Father Connors Fund

The Friends of Father Connors Fund would like to thank the following new donors for their generous contributions:

Dorothy, Janice and Beverly Turowski

In honor of their father, Stanley Turowski,
WWII, 9th Infantry Division

The current balance in the FFCF is \$2069.95. Continued contributions for maintenance and lighting expenses would be greatly appreciated.

If you would like to donate please make your check payable to: **The Ninth Infantry Division Association.** Please note in the memo section of the check "FFCF" and send to :

Mary Cooper,

Balance in all sub-accounts as of March 31, 2019

Account	Balance
General	18,582.80
Octofoil	8,611.21
Library Project	587.29
Memorial Fund	7,389.00
F.F.C.F.	2,069.95
Reunion Insurance Fund	5,000.00
2013 Reunion	0.00
2014 Reunion	0.00
2015 Reunion	3,062.49
2016 Reunion	2,591.86
2017 Reunion	4,406.78
2018 Reunion	70.39
2019 Reunion	-5,585.66
Vets Travel Fund	5,875.00
TOTAL	52,661.11

(continued from page 1)

Hotel rooms are \$139 per night, and hotel reservations must be made before July 11th to get the discounted room rate. Reservations can be made by going to:

[Book your group rate for Ninth Infantry Division Association 2019 Reunion.](#) This will take you directly to the Ninth Infantry Division Association reservation page.

You can also make your reservation by calling 800-325-3535 and request the Ninth Infantry Division room block.

A fund has been established to help defray the registration cost for 9th Infantry Division veterans. If you are interested in utilizing this benefit, please call Association President, Terry Barnhart at [REDACTED]

We hope to see you in Pittsburgh!

Jane Mitchell and Theda Ray,
2019 Reunion Committee

74th Annual Reunion Schedule of Events Ninth Infantry Division Association August 2-5, 2019 Sheraton Pittsburgh Hotel at Station Square 300 W. Station Square Drive Pittsburgh PA 15219		
Friday, August 2		
8:00 AM to 10:00 PM	Registration-Hospitality Room	Pointview
3:30 PM to 5:00 PM	Board of Governors Meeting	Edenburg
6:00 PM to 9:30 PM	Pittsburgh Cuisine Welcome Dinner	Fountainview
Saturday, August 3		
8:00 AM to 10:00 PM	Registration-Hospitality Room	Pointview
7:00 AM to 8:30 AM	Breakfast	Fountainview
10:00 AM to 11:00 AM	Memorial Service	Ellwood
11:10	Group Photo	Ellwood
1:30 PM to 3:00 PM	Show and Tell	Ellwood
3:30 PM to 5:00 PM	Board of Governors Meeting	Stoops
6:00 PM to 6:30 PM	Gateway Clipper Boarding	Queen Riverboat
6:30 PM to 9:00 PM	Riverboat Cruise, Dinner and	Queen Riverboat
	Dancing on Pittsburgh's 3 Rivers	
9:30	Fireworks (for the Pittsburgh Three Rivers Regatta)	
Sunday, August 4		
8:00 AM to 10:00 PM	Hospitality Room	Pointview
8:00 AM to 9:30 PM	Breakfast	Fountainview
10:00 AM to 11:30 AM	General Business Meeting	Ellwood
12:30 PM to 5:00 PM	Pittsburgh Pirate Game (for those interested)	PNC Park
6:00 PM to 7:00 PM	Cocktail Hour (cash bar)	Fountainview
7:00 PM to 9:30 PM	Reunion Banquet	Fountainview
Monday, August 5		
6:30 AM to 8:30 AM	Breakfast	Haselton
9:30 AM	Travel by van to Flight 93 Memorial (for those who are interested)	

Please remember to bring at least one raffle item with you to this year's Reunion. Each year a raffle is held at the reunion banquet, and we would love for everyone to bring items to donate. Part of the proceeds are donated to local Veterans' organizations. Your participation in the raffle is appreciated. If you have any questions, you may contact Kathy Tapelt at [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] or Glenda Baswell at [REDACTED]



Registration Form
74th Annual Ninth Infantry Division Association Reunion
Sheraton Pittsburgh Hotel at Station Square
300 W Station Square Drive
Pittsburgh, PA
August 2 – 5, 2019

Name: _____ Number in Party _____

The following names and contact information will be printed in the Reunion Program.

Name	Address	Telephone Number	E-Mail Address

Banquet meal choice: _____ Roasted New York strip loin with mushrooms, bourbon demi-glaze

_____ Chicken Costa Del Sol (Sautéed boneless breast of chicken
completed with a rich lemon, garlic and oregano sauce)

_____ Vegetarian

Please indicate your interest in the Pirates v Mets game on Sunday afternoon. _____

Please indicate your interest in the Flight 93 Memorial on Monday. _____

Make checks payable to Ninth Infantry Division Association (write 2019 Reunion on memo line).
\$100 per person deposit is due by ASAP, balance of \$225 per person by June 1, 2019.

Please submit this registration form and deposit to:

Theda Ray, _____

To make your room reservations at the discounted rate of \$139, please go to the following link:

[Book your group rate for Ninth Infantry Division Association 2019 Reunion](#)

If you would like me to send the link to you electronically, send an email to _____

You can also make reservations by calling the Sheraton at:

800-325-3535 and request the Ninth Infantry Division room block.



TAPS SOUNDED

The muffled drum's sad roll has beat the soldier's last tattoo;
No more on life's parade shall meet that brave and fallen few.
On Fame's eternal camping—ground their silent tents are spread,
And Glory guards, with solemn round, the bivouac of the dead.

Bivouac of the Dead by Theodore O'Hare - 1847

9th Infantry Division Medal of Honor Recipients World War II

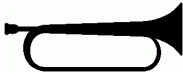
S/Sgt. Herschel F. Briles, Co. C, 899th TD Bn; Near Scherpenseel, Germany; 20 November 1944
2nd Lieutenant John E. Butts*, Co. E, 60th Infantry; Normandy, France; 14, 16, 23 June 1944
T/Sgt. Peter J. Dalessandro, Co. E, 39th Infantry; Near Kalterherberg, Germany; 22 December 1944
Sgt. William J. Nelson*, Co. H, 60th Infantry; Djegel Dardys, NW of Sedjenane, Tunisia; 24 April 1943
PFC Carl V. Sheridan*, Co. K, 47th Infantry; Frenzerberg Castle, Germany; 26 November 1944
Captain Matt L. Urban, 2nd Battalion, 60th Infantry; Renouf, France; 14 June to 3 September, 1944
* Posthumous award

Source: U.S. Army Center of Military History

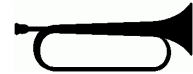
Vietnam War

SGT Sammy L. Davis, Battery C, 2nd Battalion, 4th Artillery; West of Cai Lay; 18 November 1967
SP4 Edward A. Devore, Jr.*, Company B, 4th Battalion, 39th Infantry; Near Saigon; 17 March 1968
PFC James W. Fous*, Company E, 4th Battalion, 47th Infantry; Kien Hoa Province; 14 May 1968
SSG Don J. Jenkins, Company A, 2nd Battalion, 39th Infantry; Kien Phong Province; 6 January 1969
SGT Leonard B. Keller, Company A, 3rd Battalion, 60th Infantry; Ap Bac Zone; 2 May 1967
SP4 Thomas J. Kinsman, Company B, 3rd Battalion, 60th Infantry; Near Vinh Long; 6 February 1968
SP4 George C. Lang, Company A, 4th Battalion, 47th Infantry; Kien Hoa Province; 22 February 1969
PFC David P. Nash*, Company B, 2nd Battalion, 39th Infantry; Giao Duc District; 29 December 1968
SP5 Clarence E. Sasser, Headquarters Co., 3rd Battalion, 60th Infantry; Ding Tuong Province; 10 January 1968
SP4 Raymond R. Wright, Company A, 3rd Battalion, 60th Infantry; Ap Bac Zone; 2 May 1967
* Posthumous award

Sources: A Short History of the 9th Infantry Division and
www.homeofheroes.com



Col. Arvid Paul Croonquist, Jr.
1920-2018
1 Co. 39th Inf. Regt.



TAPS OBITUARIES

TAPS OBITUARIES



Col. Arvid Paul Croonquist, Jr.
February 1920 ~ March 2018, 1 Company, 39th
Infantry Regiment

Born in 1920 in Virginia, Paul's early life as an Army brat was filled with travel and adventure. A graduate of Rutgers Prep and West Point, Class of January '43, he had a distinguished 30-year military career, retiring in Monterey.

Being a man of many talents, Paul enjoyed retirement to the fullest. He pursued creative endeavors including art, sports, theater and dancing with his beautiful wife. He was a dedicated volunteer working with Meals on Wheels, the Monterey Museum of Art, 30 years at the Monterey Bay Aquarium (1st shift Thursday) as well as several other organizations.

Family came first, never missing a game or a swim meet, Paul was our number one fan. He was compassionate, loyal, fun-loving, inquisitive, mindful, philanthropic and generous with a heart of gold. A close friend described Paul as "one of the best cadets, best officers and most outstanding person" he ever knew; an officer and a gentleman, he embodied the true spirit of the greatest generation.

Paul was preceded in death by his parents, Arvid and Marguerite; his daughter, Ann; brother, Turner and nephew, Michael. He is survived by his wife of 65 years, Phoebe; his children, Bliss, Brookes, Paul, Kristina, Catherine; their significant others and spouses, Jim, Ashley, Gerard, and Danny and his grandchildren, Jack, Danielle (Igor), Brendan, Mike and Brad. A Mass of Christian Burial was held on Saturday, April 7 at St. Angela Merici Catholic Church in Pacific Grove. Please visit www.thepaulmortuary.com to sign Paul's guest book and leave messages for his family. Go Army, beat Navy!

Robert DeSandy, whose obituary appeared in the last issue of The Octofoil, will be laid to rest at:

Arlington National Cemetery
1:00 P.M., May 31, 2019



MAIL CALL

Dear Terry,

Casemate Publishers has just released an analytic history of the Vietnam War, *Autopsy of an Unwinnable War: Vietnam*.

Autopsy provides perspective on why neither the French, nor the United States, nor the South Vietnamese prevailed in the war. The Vietnamese struggled for independence across 2,000 years. Modern Vietnamese children thrilled to the stories of the Trung sisters of 40 AD who led a revolt against the hated Chinese, and to the tales of later men and women heroes who sometimes succeeded in ousting the foreigners. This folklore became imbedded in Vietnamese character. They would struggle and suffer any hardships for as long as it took to gain independence.

The author, Colonel (Ret) William Haponski, was commissioned in Armor. During the Vietnam War he commanded a task force varying from 800 to 2,000 men. At its core was armored cavalry. Depending on mission it also would include air cavalry, armor, infantry, mech infantry, engineers and signal units, and ARVN infantry. It was engaged in a wide range of U.S. operations--pacification, Vietnamization, anti-guerrilla and small unit engagements, air assault, and fierce day and night combat against enemy battalions and a regiment. The task force was supported by artillery and U.S. and Vietnamese air.

I am also a retired colonel, commissioned in Infantry, and I am privileged to be a contributing author. As a lieutenant colonel I commanded an airmobile infantry battalion in Vietnam.

We request that on the 9th Infantry Division Association website or in your newsletter you mention the book, or if you want to review it, please provide me a mailing address and I will ask Casemate to send you a review copy.

The Casemate Publishers website provides a synopsis of the book at: <https://www.casematepublishers.com/autopsy-of-an-unwinnable-war.html>. *Autopsy* is also listed on Amazon.

Regards,
JERRY BURCHAM

Dear Mr. Barnhart,

I am writing this letter after receiving the above publication of The Octofoil. I am writing on behalf of my beloved father, Stanley Turowski who is no longer with us.

In your "President's message" you stated that "there is a segment of the German population that is starting to object to military monuments", most of these monuments being near the battle of the Huertgen Forest. I am so saddened by this for a couple reasons. One being that this generation continues to try to erase the past. They think destroying monuments and pictures will erase the atrocities inflicted.

MAIL CALL

Number two and most important to me. My father donated his 9th Infantry Division uniform to one of the museums. I believe it is in Vossenack. This was donated about eight years ago with the assistance of Paul Schumacher. He will know in what museum this is displayed. My father took special care in packaging and sending to the location. This cost him a lot to send, but was so proud to do so. He was in the battle of the Huertgen Forest and lost so many friends. He also was wounded terribly there. This wound brought him home. I remember him telling us that the Huertgen Forest battle was a horrid mistake by the leadership of the U.S. It wasn't even mentioned in history until now. Again, they want to erase this horror.

My hope is that you will continue to monitor this sad situation. Please send my father's uniform back to me if this museum closes. My dad was so proud to be in the 9th Inf. from Utah Beach to the Huertgen Forest. No closures can ever take his story away from history or us.

Sincerely,
Janice Turowski
Dearborn Heights, MI

Terry's response to the above letter follows:

Dear Ms. Turowski,

Thank you for your response to my President's Letter in The Octofoil.

The memorial that I referred to that some German people want to remove is in Schmidt located to the south of the Huertgen Forest. My father started there in February 1945 after the Huertgen Forest Battle. Unfortunately, I do not have a lot of details, but it is indeed disturbing.

Rest assured that the Vossenack Museum is alive and well. The local founders are doing a good job and expanding it. I saw your father's uniform and other artifacts donated by U.S. veterans and locals along with a letter from Gail Eisenhower whose father was KIA in the Huertgen Forest in 1944. Our Association also created and donated a memorial plaque to the 9th men lost in this terrible battle.

Albert Trostorf's group is doing a good job telling both sides of the Huertgen Forest battle story. This group is equally appalled by the actions of other local groups opposing battle memorials. I truly do not know how big this anti-memorial movement is and if it will threaten other memorials and museums. My sense is (after spending five days visiting many battle sites and memorials) that there is too much interest in knowing about World War II, especially from people who live in Belgium, Netherlands, France and other countries, including Germany.

I hope that puts your concerns to rest. Your father's treasured uniform is safe and very much appreciated by the museum.

Sincerely,
Terry Barnhart
President, Ninth Infantry Division

**THE NINTH INFANTRY DIVISION STATEMENT OF REVENUES, EXPENSES
AND NET SURPLUS (DEFICIT)-INCOME TAX BASIS FROM 7/01/18 TO 12/31/18**

	<u>CURRENT QUARTER</u>	<u>YEAR TO DATE</u>
<u>REVENUE</u>		
General Fund Income	150	1,340
Octofoil Funds Income	180	1,140
Memorial Fund Income	100	2,880
FFCF Donation Income	0	115
73rd-2018 Reunion Income	<u>0</u>	<u>5,054</u>
TOTAL REVENUE	430	10,529
<u>EXPENSES</u>		
Postage Expenses	105	234
Refunds	0	550
Printing and Copies	0	1,224
Supplies Expense	0	609
Entertainment Expense	0	1,807
Accounting Expense	820	2,005
Legal Expense	1,765	6,149
Food/Catering Expense	0	9,149
Transportation and Room Rental	0	1,000
Lodging and Travel Expense	0	2,485
Memorial Services	169	454
Miscellaneous	0	26
Donations	0	1,200
Veterans Travel Expense	<u>0</u>	<u>750</u>
TOTAL EXPENSES	<u>\$2,859</u>	<u>\$27,641</u>
NET SURPLUS	(\$2,429)	(\$17,112)

STATEMENT OF ASSETS, LIABILITIES & EQUITY-INCOME TAX BASIS 12/31/18

CURRENT ASSETS

General Fund Cash	17,867
Octofoil Subscription Cash	8,911
Octofoil Library Project Cash	587
Memorial Fund Cash	7,389
FFCF Cash	1,970
Veterans Travel Fund	5,875
Reunion Insurance Funds	5,000
70th-2015 Reunion Cash	3,062
71st-2016 Reunion Cash	2,592
72nd-2017 Reunion Cash	4,407
73rd-2018 Reunion Cash	70
74th-2019 Reunion Cash	(2,393)
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	<u>\$55,337</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>\$55,337</u>

LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

NET ASSETS

Unrestricted Net Assets-Beg.	72,450
Current Surplus (Deficit)	(17,112)
TOTAL NET ASSETS	<u>\$55,337</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS	<u>\$55,337</u>



**This year, 2019, is the 50th Anniversary of the 9th Division withdrawal from Vietnam.
This article was in the last issue of Octofoil prior to that withdrawal.**

Published in 1969

Editor's note:

This is the last issue of OCTOFOIL. It will be going home with the men of the 9th for the seventh and last time when they pull out of the Delta.

At the time of the announcement concerning the Division's partial withdrawal from Vietnam, this issue was ready for publication. In order to make this magazine available to the 9th before it's departure and still report the withdrawal, a story on mortars by SP5 Tom Niece was replaced with a story about the division and its future.

The OCTOFOIL has seen almost two years in Vietnam, three commanding generals, two information officers, three editors, and numerous writers and photographers, all of whom helped to make OCTOFOIL the bright magazine it is.

As final editor, I thank all those who have made OCTOFOIL possible and give special thanks to the Infantrymen, the soldier in the field, for doing the excellent job the OCTOFOIL staff, both past and present, has been able to report.

Richard M Robey, Editor

The Old Reliables (Reprinted from Octofoil published in 1969)

It's now official.

The 9th Infantry Division, long known as the Old Reliables, had its nickname officially recognized by the Department of the Army May 13.

Major General Harris W. Hollis, after assuming command of the division in April, requested the Old Reliables become the permanent designation for the division. In response, the Department of the Army sent the division a certificate stating that the 9th Division shall officially be known as the Old Reliables.

No one really knows for sure where or when the division first acquired the designation the Old Reliables. There are, however, several interesting accounts concerning the origin of the name.

During World War II, the division acquired several names, and it was not until toward the end of the war that the Old Reliables surfaced as the recognized name for the 9th Division. The 9th was unique as far as nicknames are concerned because the Old Reliables was derived from words of praise for continuous dedication to duty and successful campaigns against the Axis Powers.

The 9th saw action in the Africa Campaign, the Italian Front, the Allied landing in Normandy, and the battles on the Rhine and Ruhr river valleys.

Army records are sketchy concerning the source of the nickname. During March, 1945 the 9th Division had been able to locate and cross the critical Remagen Bridge on the Rhine River. They secured the German side and thereby earned the honor of being the first infantry unit to cross the Germans' Rhine barrier since the Napoleonic wars.

In the weeks that followed the crossing, the 9th Division saw heavy action in the Ruhr area of Germany, including the battles around the Schwanmmanuel Dam where the name first appeared.

According to the divisions's historical book, Hold Fast, published in 1945 "The records of the 39th, 47th and 60th Regiments indelibly marked up a score for the teamwork and comradeship which exemplifies the 9th's Old Reliables on the line."

From that time on, no other designation appeared in reference to the 9th. The Old Reliables seemed to sum it all up, and the division returned home from Europe as one of the most highly decorated combat forces in World War II.

Since arriving in Vietnam in 1966, the 9th Division has been involved in numerous significant actions that continue to uphold the validity of the nickname the Old Reliables earned in WWII.

Post Story of the Avenging Ghosts by Thomas R. Henry

(Reproduced by permission of The Saturday Evening Post. Copyright 1946, The Curtis Publishing Co.)

(continued from the Oct-Nov-Dec 2018 issue of The Octofoil)

Achievement of nearly complete silence of 4,000 marching men for four days and nights is still considered a tactical miracle. The men had to move without disturbing the scenery familiar from childhood to all the local farmers, and also without disturbing the ordinary rural sounds, such as the singing of birds in the bushes or the tinkling of cowbells. The latter, by the way, was a serious problem. A favorite rouse of German scouts in the mountains was to wear cowbells. Thus any noise made while moving through the bushes would be attributed to cattle. Day after day the soldiers, hidden motionless in brush patches, had to listen to these tinkling bells without daring to shoo the cows away, and not knowing whether they were bovines or Boche.

Before starting, every bit of equipment was examined to make sure there were no loose parts which would rattle. Selected scouts went ahead of each platoon, feeling every step to make sure of not breaking a twig or kicking a loose stone. The others, in single file, stepped precisely in the footsteps of the scouts. All orders were in low whispers. Hardest of all were the necessary halts through more than 12 hours of daylight. The men, already cramped by the cold of the mountain night, had to crouch in cramped positions, almost motionless. Wagon wheels were wrapped in Army blankets. Colonel de Rohan was forced to use relentless discipline.

Never once was there the slightest suspicion, in the hostile countryside, that a reinforced regiment was passing through. Perhaps never before or again did the Ninth Division demonstrate so well its specialty. After the fall of Messina, the anonymity which had veiled the mysterious division since it landed in Africa was lifted for a few days. There was no other rift in the blackout until Normandy.

In the Gethsemane of the Normandy hedgerows, the division reached true greatness. For nearly a month the American First Army clung to a barely tenable toehold, for the most part less than 10 miles deep. With the single exception of the First Division, General Eddy's men were the only American battle-seasoned veterans in France. They were given the all-important job of cutting the Cotentin Peninsula and taking Cherbourg.

The 47th and 39th Infantry Regiment swept into the old port city from the west and north in one of the most brilliant military maneuvers of the war. General Eddy was his own leading scout. Several hundred yards ahead of his own most advanced troops, the Ninth's commander crawled over the slate roof of a French house to survey below him the red roofed Villa Maurice, set in a rose garden on a hilltop. Here, according to intelligence reports, was the command post of the German General, Von Schlieben, commander of the city.

Seeing no signs of life, Matt Eddy and a couple of newspaper reporters went through every room of the elaborately furnished villa. All the time, Van Schlieben and 800 men were hidden in the tunneled hill under their feet. Two hours later, the Krauts were driven out when tank destroyers were drawn up before the tunnel entrance and poured in fire from three-inch guns. The Germans came crawling out with white flags, and soldiers of the 39th infantry entered to find themselves amidst stores of fur coats, silk, cosmetics and cognac beyond their wildest dreams.

For a few days after Cherbourg, the men of the Ninth were the most publicized division in the American Army. General Eddy was hailed as probably the country's most brilliant division commander. Then once again the octofoil-wearing infantrymen

marched forward into the cloud of anonymity, not to emerge until the end of the war.

The division was part of the infantry spearhead of the St. Lo Periers breakthrough. It skirted south of Paris and raced across France. The 60th Infantry crossed the Belgian border, the first Allied troops by 12 hours to bivouac under the black, gold and red flag of the hungry little kingdom. Through the hole of the Siegfried Line punched by the Third Armored Division at Roetgen, the remnants of the Ninth pushed into the Eifel Mountains in early autumn.

In the pine-scented dusk of the Eifel valleys the men of the Ninth remained hidden until, just before Christmas, out of darkness filled with swirling snow and the roar of falling waters, the division again materialized for one of the most dramatic single actions of the war. Von Rundstedt's storm troopers had smashed against the thin lines of the First Army. Directly in their path was the ill-fated 106th Division, composed largely of green troops, fresh from the United States. Few of them ever had heard a shot fired in anger.

Most of the facts which follow are from the personal recollections of Colonel Rossburger, Von Rundstedt's chief operations officer. Much nonsense has been written about The Bulge and some quite synthetic heroes have emerged from the confused picture.

"We would have succeeded," Colonel Rossburger told me when I interviewed him in a prison camp, "if it had not been for an American colonel named Smythe. He is the one American officer I would like to meet."

The whole move, he said, had been planned in the minutest detail, but Von Rundstedt had realized from the first that it was a gamble with a slim margin of success. Everything depended on the American First Army moving according to classical military tactics.

The German commander was fully aware of the weakness of the green American troops. He also was aware that on the northern flank, based around the picturesque little town of Monschau, was the Ninth Division. Von Rundstedt knew the record of the ghost division. A frontal attack against these troops, even with a greatly superior force, Rossburger admitted, was unthinkable. But once the center of the First Army was cut to pieces, the textbooks called for a tactical withdrawal of this division to straighten the line. Such a withdrawal would have given the Germans control of the vital Monschau - Roetgen - Eupen highway as a supply road. With plenty of gasoline, Von Rundstedt probably would've been able to push his tanks into Liege, where First Army headquarters were established.

But the storm troopers never reached that road. In their path was the 47th Infantry, the conquerors of Cherbourg. The commanding officer, Colonel George W. Smythe, who had been one of West Point's outstanding football players two decades before, was ordered to coordinate all American troops in the sector for a last-ditch stand. He had no information of the depth or strength of enemy penetration.

Through the winter forest, Smythe set out in a jeep with only a driver and radio operator. Stopped at the outskirts of Eupen, he was warned that he could not get a mile east of the town before he would be killed or captured.

"At least I know where the Krauts are" he said.

He found that his radio was tuned to the wrong channel, so that he was completely out of touch with Major General Lewis A. Craig, who had succeeded General Eddy in command of the division. Soon he ran into roads clogged with American troops retreating toward Eupen. The night was dark and filled with swirling snow—typical Ninth Division background.

Smythe quickly organized these retreating troops, mostly leaderless and terrorized, around the nucleus of his own regiment. He simply took over command of all American soldiers in the area. That night he organized the equivalent of a full division from stragglers. It became known popularly as the “47th Division.” The American stragglers wanted to fight; instinctively they sought a leader.

Smythe learned from prisoners that German paratroopers had been dropped behind him. This demanded extreme measures. He ordered all suspicious persons encountered on the roads seized and all cars stopped. Scouts were ordered out in the darkness to pick up all American stragglers. Sergeants and corporals organized companies. Wiremen, following closely behind them, set up a communications system. All this was accomplished in pitch darkness, in densely wooded terrain.

Still there was no contact with the enemy in force. A German paratrooper lurking in the woods was shot. Before dying, he revealed that a force of 300 had been dropped nearby. Strong combat patrols were sent out to find them. At dawn, Smythe had a fairly clear picture of the situation. The main German force had penetrated within 1000 yards of the foremost new American position set up during the night. The enemy was advancing through a dense pine forest. There was no longer any question but that the vital supply road was one of his main objectives. Smythe organized defensive positions which made the attainment of this objective impossible. Heavy artillery batteries poured shells on German concentration points. The batteries were supplied for the first time with the new proximity fuse shells from the United States just released for use of ground forces. The slaughter in the swirling snow was such as never before had been known in battle. The enemy paratroopers were mopped up in groups in the forests where they wandered in confusion.

In three days it was all over. By that time American newspapers were printing their first distorted stories of The Bulge. Actually, Colonel Rossburger says, Von Rundstadt never dreamed of success after that. His only object was to save what he could from the debacle.

After The Bulge, the Ninth moved over the rain-soaked Cologne plain to another rendezvous with destiny. In a foggy late afternoon, a task force of the Ninth Armored Division, swooping down the valley of the Ahr, came to the little pilgrimage city of Remagen. There, in front of the armored cars, lay an intact railroad bridge across a broad river. It apparently was unguarded. Within the next half hour, an infantry company, charging across with the fixed bayonets while delayed dynamite charges exploded around them, had seized the Ludendorff Bridge. For the first time since Napoleon, soldiers of an invading army had crossed the Rhine in combat.

Then came one of the blackest nights imaginable. Cold rain fell in sheets. Mud was hub deep. Communications back to First Army's Fifth Corps at Bad Neuenahr was almost entirely by-jeep riding couriers. Capture of the bridge was unexpected. But as soon as the news was received, it was appreciated that this was potentially the greatest stroke of fortune of the entire war. If a bridgehead could be held on the east bank of the Rhine, thousands of American lives, which would be sacrificed in a forest crossing over ponton bridges, might be saved. However, the Third Corps commander, General John Milliken, realized also

that the enemy would make extraordinary efforts to retrieve an incomprehensible tactical blunder.

Deployed southward from Bad Godesberg—taken by the 39th Infantry—at an average distance of about 15 miles from the west bank of the river, were the three regiments of the Ninth Division. Closest to Remagen was Colonel Smythe's 47th Infantry. It was ordered to cross the bridge, hold the little town of Erpel, which lay under a towering mountainside, and proceeded immediately to enlarge the beachhead north and south. Meanwhile the 39th and 60th Infantry Regiments were started in the direction of Remagen.

This night rises in memory now as perhaps the weirdest of the war, with the Ninth Division in its customary role of an emerging spirit materializing out of solid darkness. In ghostly silence, rain soaked troops marched through ankle-deep mud. The 47th Infantry, with its supply train and cannon companies, poured across the Rhine into Erpel. They moved along strange trails. Maps were few and inaccurate. Flashlights were prohibited. Orders were given in whispers.

By noon next day the regiment was over the Rhine, clinging tenaciously to the east bank under perhaps the fiercest artillery bombardment and jet-plane strafing experienced in the war. The Germans tried desperately to redeem their fatal blunder. Before the day was over, Nazi engineer officers who had failed to blow the bridge died before a firing squad. Every enemy resource in the area was mobilized to drive the 47th back across the Rhine.

But Colonel Smythe's men held, despite heavy losses. Within 24 hours, the 39th and 60th regiments had joined them after crossing the tottering bridge under heavy artillery fire. Then General Craig moved his headquarters to Erpel and became temporary commander of all American troops across the Rhine. The infantry regiments started driving immediately north and south to enlarge the bridgehead for other First Army divisions.

The Ninth sustained some of the heaviest—losses of the war during those black nights when they were under a constant rain of death. The men still call wound decorations “Erpel hearts.”

It was during the next few days, pushing mile by hard-fought mile eastward into the Rhineland hills, that the 39th infantry, in which the already semi-legendary Paddy Flint had been succeeded in command by youthful Colonel Van H. Bond, introduced a new kind of night fighting. They started capturing towns by artificial moonlight. Beams of giant searchlights were projected through the solid blackness of the forest. The effect was like that of a full moon behind low clouds. The whole battle area was covered with a weird white light in which the soldiers could see dimly 100 feet ahead.

Beyond Erpel, the role of the Ninth as the American Army's mystery division ended. It moved northward and occupied the headwaters of the Rohr River until the Rohr Valley pocket was closed.

Then, driving eastward and clearing enemy resistance pockets out of the Harz Mountains, it effected a junction with the Russians at the Elbe.

Following V-E Day, the Ninth settled down on the Danube as one of the American occupation divisions. The ranks were filled largely with recruits recently arrived from home. Veterans were transferred to other units for return to the United States—but there were a few still around who recalled the landing at Port Lyautey.

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Return Service Requested

As part of the Association's ongoing effort to locate 9th Division Vietnam veterans, we have created a poster that can be distributed to V.F.W. Posts, American Legions and other veteran organizations providing contact information for Terry Barnhart. If each of you would be willing to seek permission to display the poster at your local veteran establishments, we may be able to increase our membership through this effort. The poster is shown below. If you would like to receive the poster via email so that you can print it, please send an email to Jane Mitchell at [REDACTED]

**ATTENTION VIETNAM AND WWII
9th INFANTRY
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The Ninth Infantry Division Association is looking for you. This organization, whose membership consists of 9th Infantry Division veterans and their families and friends, invites you to also become a member.

Our mission is to perpetuate the memory of our fallen comrades, to preserve the *esprit de corps* of the Division, to assist in promoting an everlasting world peace exclusively by means of educational activities and to serve as an information bureau about the 9th Infantry Division.

For more information regarding the organization and how to join, contact President Terry Barnhart at [REDACTED]